



*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 6-14-07*****

From the Office of the Director of Health

Residents Urged to Help Reduce Ground-level Ozone Pollution

The Air Quality Control Division at the Springfield-Greene County Health Department asks the community to help reduce ground-level ozone pollution this summer. Ground-level ozone pollution is harmful to health and can irritate the respiratory system, reduce lung function, and aggravate asthma and chronic lung diseases. People with pre-existing respiratory or heart conditions, children and senior adults are more at risk for adverse health effects, however, healthy adults may also experience symptoms, depending on their outdoor activity level.

“Ground-level ozone is a concern during the summer months,” says air quality coordinator Doug Neidigh. “We see elevated levels of this pollutant formed on sunny days when temperatures are in the upper 80’s and 90’s, and when the wind is stagnant or very light. These levels generally peak in mid to late afternoon.”

Ground-level ozone forms when emissions from everyday sources combine with sunlight and heat. These sources include automobiles, industry, power plants, gas powered lawn care equipment, other off-road gas or diesel powered equipment and household solvents and paints.

Residents are encouraged to take simple steps to help reduce emissions from daily sources that contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone.

- Choose a cleaner commute by carpooling or riding the bus.
- Conserve electricity at home or the workplace.
- Trip chain – plan errands in advance and consolidate driving trips.
- Mow lawns in the evening during hot summer days.
- Reduce vehicle idling.
- Properly maintain vehicles and lawn care equipment.
- Refuel vehicles in the evenings on hot summer days, and avoid “topping off” the tank.

For more information about ground-level ozone pollution and to view the daily ground-level ozone forecast for the Springfield area, visit <http://health.springfieldmogov.org> or www.airnow.gov.

Media Contact:

Jaci McReynolds, Public Health Information Specialist (417) 830-9511 cell

###